MALCOLM S. KNOWLES

Teaching Adults in Informal Courses

A TWO-CHAPTER EXCERPT FROM
THE AUTHOR'S FULL-LENGTH BOOK,
Informal Adult Education

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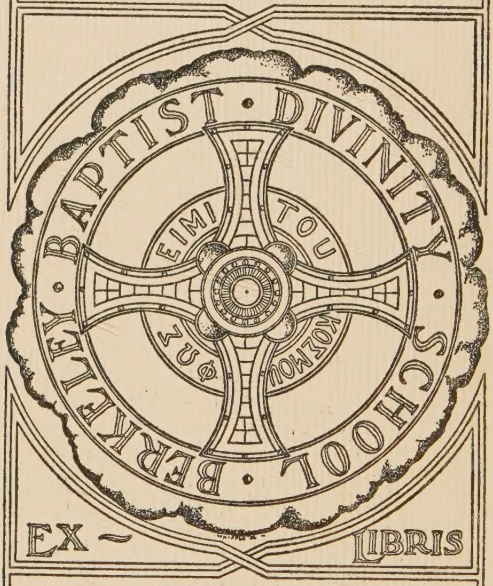

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Teaching Adults in Informal Courses

A TWO-CHAPTER EXCERPT FROM
THE AUTHOR'S FULL-LENGTH BOOK,
Informal Adult Education

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Introduction

WITHIN A SHORT TIME after *Informal Adult Education* appeared in 1950 the publisher began receiving requests for the reprinting of those chapters having to do with teaching adults in informal classes. Many of those making this request said they needed a concise, inexpensive presentation of guiding principles and techniques to give to members of planning committees, lay leaders, and teachers of informal courses.

This would seem to be a valid need that cannot be adequately met by the longer book, and so the publisher is making available Chapters 3 and 5 in this form.

If I were to rewrite these chapters afresh today, I would probably not write them exactly as I did in 1950. The results of research done in the intervening years would probably cause me to put more emphasis on the dynamics of the classroom group and on interpersonal relations as a factor in learning.

Yet, as I reread the chapters, it seems to me that the principles and techniques presented in them stand up in the light of recent research. And from the reports I have received from many practitioners who have used these materials the last few years, I take it that they have stood the test of use.

In making these brief chapters more widely available it is my hope that the way will be made a little easier for a few more people to experience the satisfaction and taste the joy that comes from successfully releasing the power of adults to learn.

M. S. K.

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How to Teach Adults

TEACHING is both a science and an art. There is a large body of knowledge about teaching, derived from research and experience. But the application of this knowledge to specific learning situations, especially adult learning situations, requires the sensitive touch of the artist. Teaching is, moreover, less a creative art than a co-operative art; for while the teacher must create the kind of atmosphere in which learning will take place, he does this not within his own imagination but in co-operation with the students.

As a science, education—especially adult education—is in its beginning. Although many important discoveries regarding the principles of learning and of teaching have been made during the last few decades, we know that much has yet to be learned. It is not difficult to distinguish really great teachers from the ordinary ones, and we can even identify many of the factors that tend to make them great teachers. We have much to learn about how to produce the same artistry in others.

For these reasons, this is an exciting time to be engaged in adult teaching. It is an era of adventure, of creative development. Every teacher can, if he wants, strike out on new paths —with very good chances that he may strike gold. He need not be limited by set rules. Teaching adults is, by and large, a pioneer profession, rich in rewards for people with imagination and initiative. Principles and methods are offered with such qualifications as "so far as we know," or "our experience to

date would seem to indicate." Yesterday's apparent axioms—such as, that adults will not do homework—may be disproved by today's experience. With this reservation, let us examine some principles and methods of teaching adults.

Purpose of Teaching

The first requisite of good teaching is an understanding that the *purpose* of all teaching is to produce changes in human behavior. The changes sought are of five kinds:

1. Changes in things known, or *knowledge*
2. Changes in things done, or *skills*
3. Changes in things felt, or *attitudes*
4. Changes in things valued, or *appreciation*
5. Changes in things comprehended, or *understanding*

The teacher who consciously seeks to create situations in which these changes will take place is on his way toward achieving artistry in teaching. His attention will then be focused on producing changes in persons, not on covering a given amount of subject matter.

A Philosophy of Education

Good teaching requires that the teacher and the institution have a philosophy of education. By this is meant a clear idea of what is ultimately valuable, as distinguished from the immediate objectives of individual courses. Without a philosophy of education, how can we determine what are "desirable" changes in human behavior? How can we be sure that our immediate objectives are consistent one with another and are pointed in the same direction?

One basic philosophy of education is derived from the concept of education as an instrument of social development. The ultimate objective of education, it states, is to produce individuals who are effective members of the societies to which they belong. Values are stated in terms of the cultural patterns of the society within which education functions. The ultimate objectives of education, therefore, are constantly changing as society changes.

A second philosophy has as its true end the education of the individual man. The ultimate objective of education, it maintains, is the development of the intellect, character, appreciation, and physical well-being of each individual to the highest degree possible. The values flowing from this philosophy are derived deductively in terms of the good, the true, and the beautiful for all men in all places at all times. The immediate situation, therefore, has no effect upon the ultimate objectives of education.

Most informal adult education programs in existence today were developed according to the first philosophy, largely because the institutions which sponsored them were themselves founded on those principles. It could be a useful experience for every adult education staff to devote some time periodically to defining its philosophy of education—to describing the kind of individual and society it wishes to produce.

What Is Teaching?

Our conception of what teaching is grows out of our conception of what learning is. Learning is something that takes place within the learner and is personal to him—an essential part of his development. It takes place when the individual feels a need, puts forth effort to meet the need, and experiences satisfaction with the results of his effort. The thing learned then becomes a part of him. Learning is "a process by which an individual makes some new skill or idea his own because in some way and to some degree it fills a need he feels."[1]

If this is learning, then teaching must mean a great deal more than merely imparting knowledge, as the dictionary describes it (and all too many teachers regard it). Teaching is a process of guided interaction between the teacher, the student, and the materials of instruction. The teacher guides the process on the basis of his understanding of both student and materials so as to create learning experiences that will be meaningful to the student. Teaching, like medical practice, is mostly a matter of co-operation with nature. The function of the teacher

[1] Sidney L. Pressey and Francis P. Robinson, *Psychology and The New Education* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1944), p. 466.

is to guide the student into the kind of experiences that will enable him to develop his own natural potentialities.

According to this point of view, teaching starts where the student is and continues to focus on him. Subject matter is a means, not an end.

Principles of Adult Teaching

How can one identify good teaching? What are the characteristics of the good learning situation? An analysis of many experiences in which learning has taken place reveals certain conditions that they have in common. They are stated here as principles of adult teaching:[2]

1. *The students should understand and subscribe to the purposes of the course.* If the students are to work efficiently they must know the *general* goal of the course, they must be able to see the picture as a whole and have a clear sense of direction. It is important, therefore, in describing the course, to state these goals explicitly, and for the instructor to interpret them at the first meeting.

If the students are, in addition, to work enthusiastically, they must have a part in setting the *specific* goals of the course. They must have assurance that the instruction will be directed toward their problems. An informal discussion of problems at the first meeting will help to make the specific goals of the course meaningful to the students.

2. *The students should want to learn.* In adult education it is assumed that most students come into a class with a desire to learn, since they usually come voluntarily. It is not uncommon, however, for the teacher of adults to be faced with the problem of having to encourage a student to want to learn. The desire to learn generally springs from a feeling of inadequacy because of the gap between where one now is and where one would like to be. A student is likely to lose his desire to learn if this gap seems too insurmountable. An understanding teacher can help a student analyze his goals and abilities realist-

[2] The writing of this section has been influenced by the admirable pamphlet, *How To Teach Adults,* published by the International Harvester Co., Chicago.

ically so that he is stimulated to want to achieve what he can.

3. *There should be a friendly and informal climate in the learning situation.* Since the interaction among members of the group is an important source of learning, the teacher has a responsibility for establishing the kind of atmosphere that will facilitate group discussion. His own attitude of understanding, acceptance, and respect for personality will tend to spread to other members of the group. In addition, the teacher can help the students to become acquainted with one another at the first meeting by having them introduce themselves and give a brief statement about their experience and interests. If the instructor looks upon his role as that of leader and learner rather than that of schoolmaster, he will be more successful in establishing the type of social situation that is most conducive to adult learning.

4. *Physical conditions should be favorable.* The arrangement of chairs, tables, and equipment should take into consideration the comfort of the students and the desired type of relationship among them. For example, if the relationship is to be one of free exchange, then the chairs should be arranged so that the students will be facing one another. The teacher should be sensitive to temperature, ventilation, lighting, and outside noises and distractions.

5. *The students should participate and should accept some responsibility for the learning process.* The best way to learn is by doing. When a person does something or says something in his own words it is much more likely to become a part of him than if he watches someone else do it or hears someone else say it. In general, the more active the students are in a learning situation the more they will learn. They will also learn more if they feel some personal responsibility toward the group process. For this reason, it is wise for the teacher to have many of the decisions about group activity made by the group. The group that is largely self-managing will produce better learning experiences than the group that is dependent upon the teacher. Furthermore, active participation and a sense of responsibility increase the student's enjoyment of the process.

6. *Learning should be related to and should make use of the students' experience.* The presentation of ideas and knowledge, if it is to be meaningful to the students, should be adapted to their level of experience. This does not mean talking down to some and up to others. It means relating and applying the generalizations being taught to the kinds of experiences represented in the group. Adults learn by associating a new experience to a past experience—by relating the unknown to the known. In teaching a course in retailing to a group of department store executives, one would use quite a different set of illustrations from those he would use in teaching the same course to a group of rural feed salesmen.

The experience of the students also enters into the learning situation as a rich source of knowledge. The members of any adult class will possess a quantity of varied experiences that can be used for the common benefit of the entire class.

7. *The teacher should know his subject matter.* We must not minimize the importance of subject matter. If the teacher is to be effective in guiding the student into worth-while learning experience he must possess expert knowledge of the subject being taught. The teacher must know the literature of the field well enough to select materials intelligently and to suggest sources to which students may go for information. He must know the subject matter well enough to organize it in proper sequence, and to serve as an on-the-spot resource for information.

8. *The teacher should be enthusiastic about his subject and about teaching it.* Enthusiasm is contagious. A teacher who obviously likes what he is teaching and derives personal satisfaction from teaching will soon have a class of enthusiasts. Enthusiasm is the best motivation to learning.

9. *Students should be able to learn at their own pace.* In every adult class there is a wide range of experience, education, aptitudes, interests, and abilities. Provision should be made for these individual differences. Students who learn rapidly can be encouraged to do more advanced work or to pursue individual projects. Slower students should be assured that in adult

education they are not competing with others, but only with themselves.

10. *The student should be aware of his own progress and should have a sense of accomplishment.* Each student enters a course with certain objectives. If his interest is to be maintained he must have a sense of progressing toward those objectives. The wise teacher will plan consciously for periodic demonstrations, exhibits, personal interviews, recitations, and other means whereby the students can measure their progress. There are many opportunities in the classroom for the teacher to point out individual and group accomplishments. It is an accepted principle of educational psychology that reward is a more effective stimulus to learning than punishment.

11. *The methods of instruction should be varied.* In any given learning situation the teacher will probably have a choice of several methods of instruction. For example, if the problem is to learn about housing in a certain community, the teacher would have a choice of lecturing, showing a motion picture, examining wall charts, or taking the group on a field trip. A good teacher is skillful in using all teaching methods, varying them according to the requirements of the situation and the needs of the students. This helps to maintain interest, stimulate student participation, and meet individual differences.

12. *The teacher should have a sense of growth.* It is important to the teacher's own attitude that he should consider the teaching experience as an opportunity for his own personal development. If the teacher is a fellow learner his interaction with the students is bound to be more stimulating than if he has the attitude that he knows all there is to know and is in the group merely to pass along his knowledge. The attitude of the teacher is the strongest force in determining the climate of the group and the attitudes of the students.

13. *The teacher should have a flexible plan for the course.* It will help both the teacher and the students to have a clear idea of what they are doing and where they are going if the plan for the course is flexible, based on the objectives agreed upon by the group. In certain types of courses, such as science or mathematics, in which the learning of facts is relatively more

important than the development of attitudes, skills, or appreciation, this plan may be quite detailed and rigid. In most courses concerned with adult problems, however, the process is likely to be more subjective and the plan will have to be more general and fluid.

The plan may be merely a rough outline, or it may be a series of carefully worked-out lessons, projects, or laboratory experiments. In any case, the plan should be formulated in such a way that the learning sequence is from simple to complex, from known to unknown; that the aims of each unit are connected with the aims of the course as a whole; and that the need for illustrative materials is predictable in order that they will be available when needed.

A characteristic common to most of these principles is what might be called "ego-involvement." Ego-involvement is the condition in which a person completely identifies himself—his goals, his values, his interests—with whatever he and his fellow students are doing. He becomes involved with a thing to the extent of losing himself in it. This condition is probably the ultimate goal of educational methodology, for when a person "loses" himself in the learning process he learns most effectively.

Selecting and Organizing the Subject Matter

One of the difficult problems is deciding what to teach. There is always more that ought to be taught than can possibly be covered in the time available. This is especially true in adult education programs with short courses of from six to twelve weeks. The teacher has the task of deciding how much can be taught and then of choosing from among the many possibilities the most important things to teach. How does he make these choices? The following steps are suggested for selecting the subject matter of a course:

1. *Refine the objectives.* When a course is initially scheduled its objectives are defined in a general way. For example, if the decision is made to offer a course in interior decorating, it is also decided in advance whether the course is intended for professional training or for housewives. It is also probably deter-

mined in advance whether the emphasis will be on apartments, low-income houses, or high-income houses. In general, it is known that the course will deal with color, fabrics, furniture, design, layout, painting, repairing, and wall paper.

There is, of course, enough to learn about any one of these subjects to warrant a full course for each one, so the teacher knows in advance that he will have to narrow his objectives to what can be accomplished in a short course.

At the first meeting with his group he will probably survey the field and explore the various possible channels of study open to the students. If he is wise, he will then discuss with the students their own particular interests and problems. Together they will limit their objectives to what can be covered in the time they will have.

2. *Determine the content.* After the goals have been set, the teacher must decide what kinds of facts, skills, attitudes, appreciation, and understanding must be taught in order to achieve these goals. His task now is to survey the possible things that might be learned and to select those that will contribute most directly to the specific objectives of this particular group.

In making this survey the teacher will call upon his own experience and insights and those of the students. He may also examine the outlines used by other teachers in the same subject. He will certainly acquaint himself with the texts, periodicals, pamphlets, and other literature in the field. He may consult with practicing experts about their ideas concerning what should be taught.

3. *Organize the subject matter.* The things to be learned should be organized into a sequence that will have unity and coherence. It is only through planning of this kind that one can be certain of working toward consistent goals and of fitting the various parts of the course together into a harmonious whole. Organization also eliminates waste of time and energy and insures logical progress.

There are at least five ways to organize subject matter on a logical basis. One method is chronological, from present to past or from past to present. This is usually used in history courses. A second method is to move from the specific to the general,

from the simple to the complex. Biology courses are frequently organized in this way, with the simple forms of life being considered first and the complex animal organisms being discussed last. A third method uses logical progression according to a sequence of principles or laws, as in the case of geometry. A fourth method is based on frequency of use. In spelling and in foreign languages, for example, those words that are used most frequently are learned first. A fifth method is to move from the general to the specific, an approach frequently used in the social sciences.

It may be desirable in some situations to organize a course without regard to logical sequence. In courses in which psychological therapy is an objective, for instance, it is usually found more successful to permit the group to discuss whatever its members feel like discussing at the time. Courses can be organized around developing interests or problems and still have inherent unity.

The usual process of organization is, first, to draft a tentative outline in such a way that the simple things are taught first, with the material gradually becoming more difficult as the course proceeds. Then it is necessary to break this outline down into units that are complete and teachable in themselves. Organization into units permits the teacher and the students to keep track of where they are and to plan their work efficiently. Ideally, there should be one unit for each class meeting, although they are frequently shorter or longer. The units may be according to topical heading, such as (to return to our interior decoration course) "Modern Furniture," or they may be in terms of problems, such as "Buying Modern Furniture."

While the teacher should do a thorough and careful job of selecting and organizing the subject matter of a course, there is danger in focusing too much attention on the *things* to be taught. The good teacher will always remember that he is teaching people, not subject matter.

Methods of Teaching

The teacher has a wide variety of methods to call upon in helping his students to learn. He should understand the pecu-

liar characteristics, purposes, advantages, and disadvantages of each method in order to choose the one in each situation that will most effectively serve the needs of the students. The chart on page 18 summarizes the characteristics, the types of interaction between teacher and students, and the advantages and disadvantages of nine basic methods.

THE LECTURE

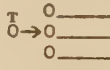
The lecture is so universally used in traditional education that in many minds it is synonymous with teaching. In adult education, however, and even in many formal schools, it is coming to be depended upon less and less as skill is gained in using methods involving a greater degree of student participation.

The lecture is probably the most efficient method for presenting a large number of facts in a short period of time. That is its greatest value. It is useful, therefore, in introducing new subjects, in summarizing the literature in a field, in recapitulating course work, and in integrating diverse materials, ideas, and concepts into an orderly system of thought.

The lecture is largely a one-way process, from teacher to students. It does not allow for much interaction between students and teacher or among students. A lecture can in only a very general sense take into account the needs, interests, and feelings of individual students. A really great lecturer, however, seems to be able to overcome many of these obstacles. By getting to know the students, or at least a representative group of them, he can rebuild his lectures according to their needs. By encouraging interruptions he can introduce some interaction. But probably more effectively than by these mechanical devices, a great lecturer can by his own attitude and personality convey a feeling of warmth, enthusiasm, and understanding which establishes a bond between him and the students. A truly great lecturer adds a note of inspiration to the learning process that is absent in the other methods.

What makes a good lecture? In addition to the human qualities just described, a good lecture should have these characteristics: It should be well organized, with ideas developed in a

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Method	Chief Characteristic	Interaction Pattern	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Lecture	Information-giving		Information is concentrated Good organization of material	Relative passiveness of students
2. Question and Answer	Questioning by students or Questioning by teacher		Student response	Formality; threatening or boring; non-creative
3. Discussion a. Socratic b. Leader-centered c. Group-centered	High degree of group interaction		Student participation; interest; use of experience	Looseness of organization
4. Project a. Individual b. Group	Investigation of problem as a whole thru co-operative effort		Group or individual responsibility; actual experience; interest. Accomplishment.	Wasted effort
5. Laboratory	Working with materials		First-hand experience, Guided practice, multisensary experience.	Time-consuming
6. Apprenticeship	Learning by doing under tutelage		Practical application	Limited to experience of leader
7. Demonstration and visual aids	Illustration of processes by teacher		Visualization of process	Limited participation
8. Individual Investigation a. Undirected b. Directed	Trial and Error		Immediacy	Lack of interaction
9. Drill	Practice		Repeated experience	Boredom, overtraining

logical sequence. For every generalization there should be an illustration that is drawn from experiences familiar to the students. The lecture should start with the simpler materials and

move to the more complex. It should relate present material to past and future materials. The main points should be listed, enlarged upon in turn, and then reviewed. Finally, the main ideas should be summarized and the conclusions drawn.

THE QUESTION AND ANSWER

Somewhat less formal than the lecture, but often used in conjunction with it, the question and answer, or recitation, method allows for interaction between the teacher and the students. Usually it is based on assignments which the students presumably prepare. The teacher questions the students about the assignment and they recite their answers. This method also permits the students to ask questions of the teacher in order to improve their understanding of the material.

The question and answer method enables the teacher to determine whether or not the students understand the subject matter and whether or not they understand what they are saying. It has the disadvantages of permitting little or no interaction among the students, of possibly being threatening to some students and therefore creating an obstacle to their learning, and of being boring if the recitations merely go over material that is known to most of the class.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Group discussion is coming to be regarded by leaders in the teaching profession as a basic method of adult education, supplanting to a large extent the lecture. There are several reasons for this trend. One is that so many efficient methods for the dissemination of information have been developed in the twentieth century. Getting the facts is no longer a major undertaking for people who can listen to the radio, read the newspapers and magazines, and have the world's finest books available without cost within a few blocks of their homes. The major problem in our culture is to "internalize" the many facts we know into our own thought processes—to make them usable in terms of our own problems.

Another reason is that adults have a rich background of expe-

rience on which the educational processes can draw. Since these experiences grow directly out of the kinds of problems with which the group is concerned, they are frequently more valid as source material for group learning than some more abstract text would be.

Discussion is an effective method for bringing abstract or unknown facts within the scope of our known experiences, thereby helping us to make these facts a part of ourselves. Discussion is the process whereby two or more people express, clarify, and pool their knowledge, experiences, opinions, and feelings. It is a co-operative process, in which several minds work together on a basis of equality and mutual respect toward either understanding or agreement.

The last statement suggests that discussion might have two purposes: understanding or agreement. It is important to recognize the difference, for discussion has sometimes been criticized because it does not always end in agreement. Agreement is desirable, however, only in those discussions that have some kind of action as their purpose, such as in committee meetings. Where the purpose is understanding facts, principles, problems, and people, the best kinds of insights may come from those discussions in which individual differences are so great that agreement is impossible.

Group discussion has other values as an educational method. As is indicated in the "Methods of Instruction" chart, it is the method that achieves the highest degree of interaction among the students and teacher. The key concept in group discussion, as Lyman Bryson points out, is that "the students here considered not only have opinions but have a right to express them."[3] Every person in a discussion group is considered to have a valuable contribution to make, and he is encouraged to participate on a basis of equality with all other members. While different members may perform different functions for the group, such as to stimulate, to record, to summarize, to criticize, to analyze, and so forth, there is no authority in a discussion group whose word must be accepted as the final answer.

[3] Lyman Bryson, *Adult Education* (New York: American Book Co., 1936), p. 90.

In such a climate, students tend to develop the ability to think independently and to express themselves clearly, with both confidence and humility.

Another value of group discussion is that it is almost certain to be keyed to the needs and interests of the students, since they are the ones who decide what is to be talked about. For this reason, group discussion is likely to hold the students' interest. Good discussion is never boring. It can be thrillingly creative.

Although group discussion has many advantages as an educational method, it also has definite limitations. It would be foolish to say that discussion is the best method for every learning situation. For instance, when the learning situation requires the presentation of authoritative or technical information, a lecture or motion picture might best do that job. Certainly in teaching a motor skill, such as golfing or typing, discussion is not appropriate. The frequent criticism of discussion as a pooling of ignorance probably arises out of the use of this method for purposes for which it is not suited.

Group discussion is likely to be the best method when the purpose is to develop social attitudes, relate knowledge to experience, influence personal values, deepen understanding, reach decisions, or plan for action.

The basic idea of discussion can be combined with a number of other methods to produce different variations:

1. The *lecture forum,* in which a formal lecture by an authority is followed by a period for questions and discussion by the audience. This method has the advantage of supplying facts and information in an orderly, organized presentation. Its disadvantages include too great dependence on one person's point of view and the difficulty of involving the audience in more than perfunctory questioning.

2. The *symposium,* in which three or more persons with different points of view on a several-sided question provide the presentation, and the audience directs questions or comments to them. This method removes dependence on a single point of view and tends to stimulate greater freedom in audience

participation. Care must be exercised, however, in obtaining speakers with different opinions but with equal ability.

3. The *panel discussion,* in which several people with different points of view or backgrounds of knowledge and experience engage in a conversational discussion before the audience. This method provides an easy transition from presentation to discussion by the audience. It requires a skillful moderator, however, who can prevent the panel from becoming a series of set speeches.

4. The *debate forum,* consisting of one speaker for and one speaker against a proposition, followed by questions and comments from the audience. This method is useful in sharpening issues, but there is constant danger that it will be dominated by emotions rather than by clear thinking.

5. The *forum dialogue,* or public conversation, in which two people carry on an informal conversation concerning a subject on which they may or may not have opposing points of view, followed by discussion by the audience. The informality of this method of presentation establishes an atmosphere in which the audience feels free to participate.

6. The *movie forum,* which substitutes one or more motion pictures for speakers. Following the presentation of the film, which should be carefully selected in terms of its value in raising real issues, the audience discusses the subject of the film. This can be a most fruitful kind of discussion if the leader constantly refers questions back to the audience and brings their experiences into the solution of problems raised in the film.

7. The *group interview,* in which an "inquiring reporter" interviews several people on the platform and then throws the discussion open to the audience. This method permits a leader to focus the contributions of speakers on the problems with which the group is primarily concerned.

These variations are generally used with large audiences, with the result that the discussion period becomes more a question and answer period than a group discussion as we

have defined it. These techniques are most useful in obtaining information from experts, clarifying issues, and gaining an understanding of different points of view.

THE PROJECT METHOD

Projects are jobs or tasks that grow out of the training being carried on in a course, organized into units that can be developed on either an individual or a group basis.

An individual project is illustrated by a course in "Starting Your Own Business," in which each student was asked to prepare a complete prospectus on some business in which he was personally interested. The students compiled folders showing how they determined the proper location for their businesses, how they would organize their personnel, how they would finance the first year, the shop or store layout, advertising and sales plans, and accounting systems. These folders were then discussed in class.

The group project, which has the additional values that come from co-operative effort, is illustrated by the course in "Practical Interior Decoration," in which one group of five students worked out a plan for a three-room apartment, another group worked on ranch-type houses, and so forth.

The project method stimulates interest and gives the students an opportunity to pursue their special interests. It also enables the students to obtain practical experience and to gain a sense of accomplishment.

THE LABORATORY METHOD

In the laboratory method the subject matter or theory is studied first and is then tested through actual experiment. The best-known examples of this method are in the teaching of chemistry and physics. It can be used in any situation, however, in which theory can be translated into practice. In social psychology, for instance, group reaction to various stimuli (such as a shout of "Fire!") can be discussed and then tested by actually trying it in the group.

The laboratory method has the advantage of giving the student actual experience and of appealing to a variety of senses.

Its greatest disadvantage is that it requires more time than most other methods.

APPRENTICESHIP

Apprenticeship is a method in which a student learns by working closely with a skilled practitioner. It is "learning by watching and doing." Apprenticeship has been used most extensively in the skilled trades, such as plumbing, carpentry, and masonry. It has a close parallel, however, in the assistantships in academic institutions. Its great value is the practical application of the things learned, but the amount that can be learned is limited by the skill, knowledge, and experience of the practitioner with whom the apprentice works.

DEMONSTRATION

Demonstration consists of the illustration of a process by the teacher, usually in connection with a lecture. For example, a physics teacher may demonstrate the law of gravity by dropping an object. Demonstration helps the student to visualize a process that might be difficult to understand completely from verbal description. It has the disadvantage, however, of giving little opportunity for student participation.

INDIVIDUAL INVESTIGATION

In individual investigation a student undertakes to learn something through his own efforts. The most universal method of learning is undirected real experience, a process of trial and error or success. Infants learn to talk by trying out sounds until they hit on one that commands a response from their elders. Most of the things adults know about the business of living have been learned through individual investigation—by trying things out until they find something that works, or by seeking out answers to problems as they arise.

The efficiency of individual investigation as a method of learning can be greatly increased if it is carried on under guidance. An experienced teacher can help students to eliminate some of the blind alleys and can guide them into the more rewarding channels of investigation. This method has the

disadvantage of providing little opportunity for interaction with others who are seeking the same goals.

DRILL

Drill is the process of learning by repeated practice. Spelling was once taught by requiring students to write each word many times. Most physical skills must be perfected by practicing them for long periods, as great pianists, typists, and tennis players will testify.

While drill seems to be necessary in many kinds of learning, there is serious danger that it may become monotonous and cause the student to develop a revulsion to the thing being learned, as many non-great pianists will testify.

SUMMARY

These are the principal methods of teaching. Each one has unique characteristics that render it peculiarly useful in certain situations and out of place in others. Usually the methods are most effective when used in combination—as when a lecture includes several demonstrations, is followed by a question and answer period, and then is discussed. Over the span of a whole course the teacher may find an opportunity to use almost every method effectively.

The Materials of Teaching

By materials of teaching is meant sources of knowledge, such as literature and audio-visual aids. Each type of material has unique characteristics that qualify it to fill certain specific needs in the learning process. A good teacher is familiar with all types of materials and their special uses. He plans their use in such a way as to exploit their peculiar qualities.

LITERATURE AND TEXTBOOKS

The most universally used material of teaching is the standardized textbook. Most textbooks have been written for the purpose of teaching a given amount of subject matter to a well-

defined age group. They are frequently supplemented with general literature which has not been standardized for specific teaching situations. Literature and textbooks are used in teaching in at least three general ways:

1. *The use of the text as the basis of the organization of the course.* In text-centered courses, reading assignments are made and discussion is based on these readings. This type of instruction is found most often in the teaching of science, history, and mathematics. It is obvious that rigid adherence to a textbook does not leave much room for individual differences, student needs and interests, or consideration of problems arising out of the experience of the students. It puts the focus on subject matter rather than on persons.

2. *The use of literature to obtain general background.* Many teachers provide their students with bibliographies, usually with annotations, and give them considerable latitude as to which of the books they read. The optional use of literature permits each student to pursue his own interests to some degree, and it does not tie the teacher to a rigid pattern of organization. Literature can be used in this way as a basis for discussion, for filling in on lectures, in connection with projects, or in individual investigation. The writing of interpretive or critical reports may help the students to integrate their reading into the main stream of the course.

3. *The use of literature as a reference resource.* Literature may be used as a source of information to which students may go when the need for more knowledge arises. For example, if a group that is studying interior decoration finds that its progress is blocked because it lacks knowledge about Victorian furniture, the teacher can refer it to literature on that subject. When students have a specific purpose in mind they will learn much more from their reading.

There are occasions on which each of the above uses of literature can be employed to good advantage. The teacher should be sensitive to the needs of each situation and should use the literature in the way that best serves those needs.

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

So many developments have recently occurred in the field of audio-visual aids that many people have been tempted to go overboard for them. Even the most glamorous, most novel, and most effective audio-visual device can never be more than an aid to teaching. It cannot be the teacher, although on far too many occasions a motion picture has been used as if it were.

Audio-visual aids contribute to learning through stimulating interest, through appealing to a number of the senses, through concentrating a great deal of information into a concise form, and through providing an experience that is common to all the students. The teacher should understand the specific characteristics of each aid that will make it the best choice for use in a particular situation.

The following steps are involved in the effective use of teaching aids:

1. *Planning by the instructor.* The introduction of audio-visual aids into a course should be planned to fit in with the methods being used and with the subject matter development, thus forming a part of an integrated program.

2. *Selection of the aid.* The available aids should be carefully reviewed by the teacher until he is completely familiar with their content and quality. Only those aids that are clear, simple, interesting, and to the point should be selected.

3. *Preparation of equipment.* It is extremely important in the use of most teaching aids that whatever equipment is needed be set up and tested before it is used. For example, if films are to be used the projector should be in place, the screen should be set up, the room should be darkened, and the chairs should be arranged in the proper order. Charts should be in proper sequence. Blackboards should be clean, and chalk and erasers should be handy.

4. *Preparation of the student.* The students should understand the purpose of the aid and should have an idea of what to look for in it.

5. *Summary of the information.* When a large amount of information is presented it will increase the aid's effectiveness if the points are summed up afterward.

6. *Discussion of the information.* In order to be sure that the information presented by the aid is meaningful to the students it should be discussed and related to other aspects of their learning.

The principal audio-visual aids available for classroom use are the following:

The Motion Picture

A rapidly increasing number of both sound and silent motion pictures is available for instructional use. Many of these films have been made specifically for teaching; others have been adapted to this purpose. They are readily available everywhere, on either a free or rental basis, through public libraries, school systems, universities, community organizations, and commercial distributors. In many localities there are film councils that give free advice concerning the use of motion pictures.

The motion picture is one of the most realistic ways in which outside experience can be brought into the classroom. For this reason there is special danger of its being considered more than just a tool of teaching.

The Film Strip

The film strip is a series of still pictures mounted on a continuous celluloid strip that are flashed on a large screen through a projector. They have been found to be particularly effective in training military personnel and new industrial workers in technical operations, because the images can be held on the screen until they are thoroughly assimilated. Some film strips are accompanied by recordings of explanatory comments, while others provide the teacher with manuals explaining how they should be used.

Exhibits

There is hardly a subject that is not capable of portrayal through exhibits. This technique has been most highly developed by natural history and art museums and public libraries, which are always co-operative in helping teachers arrange exhibits for their own groups. The most common materials

used in exhibits are photographs, literature, works of graphic art, models, manufactured products, and student work. Considerable skill is required in arranging an exhibit so that its purpose is clear, it is interesting, and it develops its story logically.

Radio and Television

Radio and television are used, but they are still in the experimental stage educationally. The "Town Meeting of the Air" and other broadcasts of forums serve as the jumping-off point for discussions on current events. Some public school systems have installed loud speakers in their classrooms that can be used with regular broadcasts or with special productions by the school itself. There has been some experimentation with the teaching of home study courses by radio.

Recordings

A wide variety of recordings and transcriptions is available for teaching use. The most commonly known are standard musical records, invaluable in courses in music appreciation. Commercial producers list complete language courses in albums, excerpts from plays, famous speeches, and portrayals of historic events. Transcriptions of some radio programs are available through motion picture distributors. Since recordings appeal only to the hearing sense, there is danger that the students' attention will wander. In a number of situations, however, recordings have proved very effective.

Models

It is frequently possible to obtain from a manufacturer, or to construct, a working model of some process being studied in a course. An example is the combustion engine with removable sections that show the inner parts.

Charts

One of the best-known of all visual aids is the wall chart. Without it geography would be practically unteachable. Chart manufacturers have greatly improved their techniques and enlarged their scope, until charts are now available on almost every subject. They are especially valuable in presenting com-

plex ideas and processes in an easily understood manner through the use of symbols and flow lines. Charts can, of course, be constructed by the students.

Blackboard

The most universally used visual aid is the common blackboard. While many teachers have not progressed beyond using the blackboard for the listing of statements, problems, formulae, and diagrams, it is capable of the same kind of skillful use of symbols and flow lines that are found in charts.

Pageants

The pageant offers special opportunities for the development of an understanding of historical and current events. It has the additional advantage of involving a high degree of creative student participation.

FIELD TRIPS

The field trip is a method of instruction in the sense that the students collect information about something they are studying by actually going out and observing it. For example, a class studying slum conditions would certainly have a much better understanding of the problem if they visited a slum area. Field trips are most commonly made to industrial plants, places of historical, geographical, geological, and sociological interest, and governmental organizations.

If the field trip is to be most effective it should be well planned, with proper transportation and guidance facilities, and it should be explained and discussed in advance.

ROLE-PLAYING

Role-playing, which is described in detail in Chapter 4,* is another means of instruction that might well be used more widely in informal adult education. It is one of the most effective methods for gaining insight into human relations.

Measuring Student Progress

Good teaching requires that there be some way to measure what the students are learning. The teacher must know whether

* In Knowles, *Informal Adult Education* (New York: Association Press, 1950).

or not his methods and materials are effective. It is equally important for the student to have some way of measuring his progress, since a sense of achievement is one of the chief motivations for learning.

The standard method for measuring student progress has been the written test. To most adults the words "test," "quiz," and "examination" call forth such unpleasant memories that it is often difficult to use them in voluntary adult groups. We have not yet been able to develop satisfactory substitute methods for measuring some kinds of learning. The result is that we find some adult groups filling out "inventories" or writing "summaries" or solving "case problems." The essential difference is not so much in the change of name as in the fact that competition among the students has been eliminated. If the purpose is to measure the progress of an individual, then there is no point in comparing him with others. The comparison should rather be between what he is now and what he was before. Thus, in informal adult education, tests—when they are given at all—are not always graded, at least in the traditional sense. They may be analyzed in terms of significant factors, and then recommendations are made.

A teacher is constantly making subjective evaluations about each student's progress. He is sensitive to hundreds of little signs that give indication as to how well the student is doing. He forms judgments on the basis of his observation of the student's participation and written work. The student, also, has feelings of his own about how well he is doing. While these subjective evaluations of the teacher and the students are an important clue to student progress, and in some cases they seem to be the only ones available, they are not as reliable as more objective data.

Objective information can be obtained from various kinds of tests. The most familiar type is the essay test, in which the student writes answers to questions designed to show how much he has learned and how well he understands it. A newer type is the "objective test," in which a student indicates whether he thinks a statement is true or false, or in which he makes a choice from among several statements. The objective test

is more adaptable, easier to administer and score, and can be standardized in such a way as to provide an accurate basis of camparison. It reduces to a minimum the personal judgment of the teacher.

Another kind of test that is being used increasingly, although it requires specialized training, is the projective type of test, in which the student projects his personality into various situations. The best known of these tests is the Rohrschach "ink blot" test, in which the subject constructs an imaginary story or describes impressions suggested by a series of standardized ink blots. Similar tests have been devised using a series of pictures. A skillful analysis of the student's comments provides a great deal of information about his attitudes, social adjustment, and personality structure. It should be emphasized, however, that these tests can be administered and interpreted only by trained psychologists.

The final test of any learning, of course, is how well the individual can use it in a practical situation. It is often possible to have students demonstrate their learnings under actual working conditions. Examples of this kind of testing are found in the skilled trades and in such other skill subjects as typing and shorthand.

It is important to recognize that there are many different kinds of learning to be measured. The teacher must know which kind of learning each test is designed to measure and how accurate it is. For example, most essay and objective tests are designed to measure chiefly the number of *facts* acquired and the *understanding* of principles and relationships. Progress in learning *skills* must usually be measured by observation of the use of the skills under controlled conditions. Changes in *attitude* or emotional development may be measured through paper and pencil attitude tests, projective tests, or controlled observation. While it is essential for the teacher to observe and test the progress of his students, he must remember that the construction, administering, and interpreting of tests is a highly specialized field, and he should not experiment with unfamiliar tests without expert guidance.

Informal Courses

When a group of people come together in a number of meetings for the purpose of learning something simply because they want to know about it, they are participating in what we would call an informal course. It would not be an informal course if the purpose was to grant credits toward a diploma or a degree; it would then be an academic course. At the other extreme, it would not be an informal course if it had no educational objective at all; it would then be a recreational activity.

What Are Informal Courses?

Informal courses are distinguished from forums, lecture series, clubs, and other forms of adult education principally by the unity of organization and continuity of membership and leadership found in courses. An informal course has a definite enrollment, with the same people attending through the entire series of meetings. It usually will also have the same leader throughout, although there may be guest lecturers. There is an inherent unity in an informal course, since all the meetings will be related to the same objective.

Informal courses are found in many places and in many forms. When a church, a P.T.A., or a women's club decides it should learn more about leadership techniques or child psychology or practically any other intensive subject, it probably organizes an informal course. When an industrial concern wants to train its foreman in human relations, or a labor union wants

to orient its members to union policies, informal courses are often the solution. Informal courses will be found in many other organizations, including libraries, youth organizations, agricultural groups, business associations, and governmental agencies. Even formal educational institutions, such as universities and high schools, offer this kind of adult education to increasing numbers of people.

The Role of Informal Courses in an Organization

When and why should an organization undertake to offer a program of informal courses? Some of the situations in which informal courses have been found to be especially appropriate are the following:

1. *When it is desired to develop special skills.* For instance, when a camera club finds that it has a large group of new members who do not possess some of the basic skills necessary for the practice of photography, it can most efficiently develop those skills through organized informal classes. During the World War it became necessary to train large numbers of people in first aid. One possible answer would have been to send lecturers out to address hundreds of people on the principles of first aid. But the American Red Cross knew from its vast experience that this kind of skill-training can be accomplished best through hundreds of small informal courses in which individuals can actually practice the techniques of first aid. A large labor union wishes to develop skill in collective bargaining negotiation among local labor union leaders. Should it issue a bulletin, call a conference, or send a field representative to consult with each local leader individually? It may use all these methods, but the more experienced labor unions will, in addition, call its local leaders together for an intensive short-term informal course.

2. *When it is desired to produce changes in attitudes.* While there is no guarantee that any educational activity will produce a change in attitude, the informal course is one of the most promising methods. Attitudes are frequently changed through the acquisition of new information that is made real in terms

of the individual's own experience. Changes in attitude also occur as a result of new insights into the behavior of other people and an understanding of oneself. The give-and-take of creative group thinking, which is a characteristic of good informal courses, provides an environment in which such insights and understandings develop. Attitudes sometimes change also as a result of the pressure of group opinion. In informal courses the group is free to express itself and, in miniature, to serve as a mirror of public opinion.

When will changes in attitude be an objective of an organization? Almost all of the courses in a general adult education program should have attitudinal change as one of their primary objectives. For instance, probably a majority of the people who enroll in courses in psychology do not want to know more facts about psychology so much as to be able actually to get along better with people—which means, in the last analysis, changing their attitude towards themselves and towards others. Even in a course like social dancing, the real purpose of an individual's enrolling may be not so much to learn new dance steps as to overcome an attitude of timidity towards the opposite sex.

Sometimes it may be desirable to organize an informal course expressly for the purpose of changing attitudes. This was the solution devised by a judge in Chicago who presided at the trial of a group of participants in a race riot. He sentenced them to compulsory attendance in an informal course on human relations until such time as they were free from prejudice.

3. *When it is desired to provide short-term exploratory experiences preparatory to affiliation with a long-run program.* Some organizations, such as athletic clubs, Y.M.C.A.'s, and university clubs, have a membership policy that involves commitment for a considerable period of time (usually one year) and the outlay of a sizable membership fee. Short-term informal courses provide an opportunity in such a situation for members of the general public to be brought into the building for an inexpensive exploration of its services and facilities. In much the same way, short courses can be a stepping stone toward enrollment in a degree program in university extension. Many

adults are skeptical of their ability to resume academic studies after a lapse of several years. They need the exploratory experience of a short course to reassure them. In other words, informal courses can function as an instrument of recruitment for a larger program.

4. *When it is desired to attract a diversified clientele.* It is not uncommon among recreational agencies to find that their programs have become out of balance—let's say they have become predominantly physical activities—and that their participants are people whose interests are rather narrow. In such a case, if the organization wishes to provide a broader scope of services to the community, it may be desirable to attract a group of new participants whose interests are more varied. Informal courses are likely to be especially effective in accomplishing this objective, since there is practically no limitation in the scope of interests to which they can appeal.

The Organization of an Informal Course Program

There is a wide variety of practice in the organization of informal course programs, ranging from the staff-dominated organization of many schools to the completely participant-managed programs of such voluntary organizations as the League of Women Voters. Informal courses may be under institutional auspices, in which case their precise form of organization will be largely determined by the traditions and policies of the sponsoring institution. Or, they may be organized as completely separate and independent entities, without any predetermined pattern of organization.

Frequently an informal course is organized and offered as an independent unit within some larger program. Thousands of organizations that depend on volunteer leadership, ranging from the Boy Scouts to political parties, bring their volunteers together periodically into leadership training courses. Many churches sponsor informal courses for adults in subjects ranging from Bible study to religion and psychiatry. Numerous other organizations similarly have individual courses intermittently in their programs.

Although the discussion in this chapter is primarily in terms

of programs involving groups of courses, many of the principles apply equally to independent courses.

There are many advantages in consolidating several courses into an integrated program, rather than presenting them as a series of individual offerings. Not only can the individual course be promoted more efficiently when it is one of a series, but the program has a greater impact on the individual and on the community. It seems more significant. There is an additional advantage if the program as a whole can be given an attractive unifying label, such as "Lifelong Learning," "Hobby Nights at the 'Y,'" "Learning for Living," "University of Life," "Summer School for Office Workers," or "Modern Industrial Institute."

An informal course program must be kept highly flexible if it is to adapt itself continuously to the changing needs of adults. The best informal course programs seem to operate on an almost perpetual "emergency" basis, responding within a few days to a change in the headlines, altering their plans on short notice to take advantage of the unexpected availability of a first-class instructor, or quickly organizing a new course to meet an unanticipated need that a small group of individuals has presented. This kind of flexibility is difficult to achieve if the informal course program is merely an appendage of some older, more routine type of program.

Determining What Subjects to Offer

Sometimes there is little question about what subjects should be offered in an informal course program, owing to limitations inherent in the situation. For instance, an in-service training program in an industrial plant would automatically be concerned wth the job skills involved. Usually, however, there is a wide choice of possible subjects. The program director and his committee are then faced with the problem of deciding which subjects would be *best*. Several principles of curriculum building are suggested:

1. *A tentative goal should be set as to the total number of courses to be included in the program.* This goal will depend

upon several factors, including capacities of the staff, number of meeting rooms, a realistic appraisal of the potential clientele, financial resources, and past experience. In general, it would seem to be sound advice to start a new program on a relatively small scale and to build slowly and soundly. The *Learning for Living* programs in Chicago's Central Y.M.C.A. started in 1946 with ten courses and added ten courses each quarter until the maximum of ninety had been reached. This seems to be a fairly typical pattern for community-center-type programs in large cities.

2. *Every program should be founded on a solid core of subjects in which there is a known need and interest, but should also include a small number of purely experimental subjects for the purpose of exploring new needs and interests.* The value of this principle is illustrated by a recent experience of a program director who found an expert instructor for a "sure-fire" course in interior decoration, but was persuaded by him to offer in addition a course in the expert's particular hobby, antiques. No participant had ever asked for a course on antiques, and the program director had no reason to believe there was much interest in it. When enrollments had been completed, however, the antique course was filled to overflowing, while the course on interior decoration had only a moderate registration.

The subjects that prove to be popular in almost every program in the country and might be thought of as the basic core of informal course programs are listed on pages 23 and 24.* Needs and interests that are more local can be discovered by the community survey, interest questionnaire, and other methods described in Chapter 8.*

3. *A general program of informal courses should seek to present a more or less balanced variety of subjects.* It happens that people often have what might be called a secondary interest that would not in itself impel them to enroll in a course. But if they enroll in a course appealing to a primary interest and find that a course in their secondary interest is being given on the same night, they are attracted to it. For instance, a recent study of a group of adult students in a course on world

* In *Informal Adult Education.*

affairs revealed that few of them would have enrolled in that course if they had not been coming to the center anyway for a course in public speaking, social dancing, or some other primary interest. Since one of the objectives of adult education is to broaden the interests of participants, it seems important to include as wide a variety of subjects as possible.

One adult education program[1] has included in its objectives the ten areas of subject matter with which it will be concerned, and every effort is made to include at least one course in each area every term.

4. *Subjects should be selected that are in keeping with the policies of the sponsoring institution and the objectives of the program.* It is important for the program director and his committee to have a definite frame of reference to turn to in deciding whether or not a given subject would be a desirable one for that program. Once a program becomes established in the community the director is likely to be deluged with requests for all kinds of courses by proponents of certain points of view or by people who would like jobs teaching. His life can be made miserable unless he has a definite set of policies to back him up in screening such requests. Furthermore, unless a consistent policy is followed the program will lack integration.

5. *Subjects should not ordinarily be offered that will duplicate or conflict with the programs of other organizations in the community.* For a suggested set of criteria to apply in determining when duplication does or does not exist, see page 185, Chapter 8.[1]

6. *Subjects should be limited to objectives that can be accomplished within the time limits set by nature of the program.* Ordinarily, informal courses provide for between six and thirty hours of instruction. It would obviously be a mistake to try to cover "Personnel Management" in six hours, whereas a more limited aspect of the subject, such as "Preparing Job Descriptions," might be treated quite adequately in that time.

Some subjects can be arranged into courses of progressive development, such as beginning, intermediate, and advanced. This system is most often employed in the case of languages.

[1] See *Informal Adult Education*, pp. 184 and 185.

Wherever possible, however, the units should be arranged so that new students can be admitted at each level if they meet certain requirements, since there is an inevitable shrinkage in the original group as it passes from one level to another.

The objectives of each course should be carefully stated, in order that both the instructor and the students have a goal in mind. The general objective of the course is determined when it is originally scheduled, but more specific objectives may be determined at the opening meeting by the instructor and the participants co-operatively. These objectives should not be so broad as to be incapable of accomplishment and not so narrow as to fail to challenge the participants and the instructor.

In framing the objectives for a course, it would be well to bear in mind that the purpose of informal adult education is seldom to produce a finished product, but rather to give adults tools they can use for continued self-study. A vocabulary course, for instance, could hardly hope to produce polished vocabularies in its participants in ten weeks. But it can give them an understanding of certain principles and methods that will help them to improve their vocabularies for years to come. An awareness of this fact can save a lot of frustration on the part of instructors who feel they cannot do justice to a subject in ten weeks.

7. *Subjects can be delineated according to topical areas of knowledge or according to functional problems to be dealt with.* The traditional academic courses are almost entirely concerned with areas of knowledge, such as "Early American History" or "Elementary Physics." This system has carried over into informal course programs to a large extent, but there is a growing tendency to supplant it with a problem approach. For example, "Getting Along with Others" is becoming more popular than "Principles of Applied Psychology." "Writing Short Stories" is preferred to "English Composition," and "Using Good English" is replacing "Basic Grammar." This represents a great deal more than a mere playing with words. It shows that informal adult education is functional and is concerned with solving the real-life problems of people, not merely with abstract knowledge.

8. *There should be a balance between courses that produce an income and courses that require subsidy.* There are certain courses that attract large groups of people and are relatively inexpensive to operate, and so produce an income. Among courses of this nature are usually found those dealing with vocational improvement, public speaking, social dancing, music appreciation, and psychology. On the other hand, there are courses that almost always have to be subsidized because the enrollment in them is limited to small groups and they are expensive to operate. Many of the arts and crafts fall into this category, as well as public affairs, religion, and experimental courses. Sound financing requires that a sufficient number of the income-producing courses be included. But if a program is to offer a balanced variety of subjects and to be dynamic, it is also necessary to include a number of courses that require subsidy. By skillfully weighing the one against the other, both a balanced program and a balanced budget can be achieved.

9. *Subjects should be selected with a sensitivity to seasonal interests and to current developments in human affairs.* The seasonal variations are fairly constant and obvious. Courses on gardening are best in late winter and early spring; announcements of them should arrive shortly after the seed catalogs are delivered. Courses on interior decorating are usually most popular in the spring, when interest in spring cleaning is at its peak. Automobile driving is best in the fall or spring, at least in the North, because the roads are not in suitable condition for instruction during the winter.

People who plan courses ought to keep an eye on the headlines. A crisis in international affairs may be the signal for a new course on "How Diplomacy Works," or an outburst of racial tension may indicate a need and interest in that area, or a controversial election campaign may be a natural springboard for a course in practical politics. Such other events as the publication of a best-selling book (such as the Kinsey Report) or a new discovery (atomic energy) may result in a wave of interest that will provide a natural stimulus for an informal course. During a depression the needs and interests of adult students are quite different from what they are during a boom.

10. *It is frequently good practice to arrange for one instructor to give two courses in an evening.* Usually it is more attractive to an instructor to spend a full evening teaching in the program, and to be compensated for two or three courses. Better instructors can often be recruited by offering them this added inducement. Sometimes, in the case of more popular subjects, the two courses might be in the same subject—an early and late section. Frequently, however, good instructors have a secondary interest that would make a good experimental course. The case of the interior decoration teacher who was also an expert on antiques has already been cited. Another instance is an instructor of vocabulary building who was also a champion chess player and who gave a very successful second course in "Learning to Play Chess."

11. *The selection of courses should be according to policies established by the directing committee, but should be made by the program director.* When a program consists of more than a few courses the staff worker responsible should probably be granted a wide degree of latitude in the final determination of the subjects to be offered. For instance, the directing committee might express the desire that a certain subject be offered in the next series. The program director may not be able to find a first-rate instructor by the deadline for going to press, and he should not feel under pressure to compromise with a second-rate instructor. On the other hand, he should be free to include a new course for which a highly competent instructor suddenly becomes available, even though it has not been specifically approved by the committee.

Scheduling Informal Courses

1. *When should course meetings be held?* The answer is, simply, when it is most convenient for the people being served. Evening hours prove to be most convenient to the vast majority of adults, although some informal courses are offered during the day for swing-shift workers and for housewives. At a downtown location, a luncheon meeting may be most convenient for some people. Almost all downtown programs schedule their courses to start at 6:00 or 6:30 o'clock. Presumably, city workers

find it more convenient to stay downtown after work, have a quick supper, and go right to class. Programs that take place in residential neighborhoods, on the other hand, schedule most of their classes to start at 7:30 or 8:00 o'clock, allowing their participants time to have dinner at home before attending class.

2. *How long should the meetings last?* The general practice ranges from one to three hours, but the most common duration of class meetings seems to be an hour and a half. Several factors will determine which length of time is best in a given situation.

The element of fatigue must be considered in all cases. It is doubtful if people who have just finished a hard day's work can concentrate very well for much longer than an hour and a half of unbroken study. With a ten-minute intermission, however, they frequently are ready for another hour and a half.

Another variable is the type of activity. Certain types of laboratory and arts and crafts courses require a considerable amount of preparation each evening, such as setting up apparatus, and therefore demand a longer period if the participants are to get in the allotted time for instruction.

A third factor is concerned with scheduling. When the duration of class periods is one hour, it is possible to schedule three sets of classes each evening. Hour-and-a-half and two-hour periods permit two sets. Longer periods will probably permit only one set of classes. In general, it seems desirable to have at least two class periods.

A fourth factor has to do with how late people can be expected to stay. The most general practice is to end all classes at 10:00 o'clock, but this may vary an hour each way.

A general principle that seems to have merit might be stated as follows: class meetings should not be so short that too little will be accomplished nor so long that participants become fatigued.

3. *What days of the week are best?* The general experience seems to be that the earlier days in the week are the most popular, although there are many exceptions to this pattern. The habits of the particular group being served should be the determining factor.

4. *How frequently should classes meet?* The most common practice is to schedule class meetings once a week. Adults hesitate to set aside two evenings a week for education, unless there is a particularly strong motivation or a sense of urgency. Some programs, notably the Great Books courses, have experimented with holding meetings on alternate weeks. This practice may be desirable if a great deal of between-meeting preparation is required; but there is likely to be a higher rate of mortality in attendance, since it is more difficult for people to keep track of their schedules.

5. *How should subjects be grouped in the time schedule?* No general rule can be framed for guidance in answering this question, but it is a problem that deserves serious consideration. In a program that has two sets of courses each evening, each set should probably include a variety of subjects, but special attention should be given to subjects that seem to pair up nicely. For instance, many of the people who join the program for public speaking would probably also be interested in a course in parliamentary law. It would be wise, then, to schedule public speaking in the earlier period and parliamentary law in the later period in the same evening, and to call attention to the combination both in the promotion literature and at the first meeting of the public speaking course.

6. *How long should the terms or series be?* Terms range in practice from six to sixteen weeks. The same principle probably applies here that applies to length of meetings: terms should not be so short that too little will be accomplished nor so long that interest wanes. An examination of the program announcements of a number of informal course programs shows that ten weeks is the most frequent length of term, with eight and twelve weeks tying for second place.

Selecting and Supervising Instructors

There is no question that the quality of the teaching staff determines, more than any other factor, the quality of an informal course program. The building and maintaining of a competent faculty is a problem that deserves careful attention.

SELECTION OF INSTRUCTORS

1. *What are the best sources of instructors?* For programs tending toward academic subject matter, the best source of instructors will probably be the formal educational institutions —high schools, colleges, and universities. For programs that are based on problems of living, the best sources of instructors will probably be those places in which people are doing the kinds of things they are to teach. For example, for a course in "Using Psychology in Everyday Living," the best instructors are likely to be found in psychological clinics or psychiatrists' offices, where real problems are being handled. A good wood-carving instructor is likely to be found in a furniture factory, a public speaking instructor in a radio station, a creative writing instructor in a newspaper office, a business mathematics instructor in an accountant's office, and an interior decoration instructor in a department store.

Probably the best teachers of adults are people who are enthusiastic amateurs in their subject—at least, amateurs at teaching it. This is not to say that good teachers of informal courses cannot be found in formal educational institutions. Some of the very best teachers in informal course programs have been full-time teachers in high schools and universities. But it should be emphasized that there is considerable danger that a university professor might merely repeat to a group of adults the lectures he has prepared for undergraduate students. And the chances are very high that if this happened the adults would soon stop attending.

2. *How does one determine who will be a good instructor?* Certainly it is necessary to gather all the usual information about an instructor's education, experience, and character, just as with any other type of employee, through interviews, academic transcripts, and letters of recommendation. These data will have to be evaluated, however, in terms of the unique qualities that make for success as a teacher of adults. A good academic record might not carry the same weight in this situation as it would in the case of a high school teaching job. It is necessary, therefore, that the program director have a

clearly stated set of criteria by which to judge the qualifications of candidates for teaching positions. The following is a sample set of criteria developed by one adult education program:

a. An instructor must not only have knowledge but must be a successful practitioner of his subject or skill.

b. He must be enthusiastic about his subject, and about teaching it to others.

c. He must have—or be capable of learning—an attitude of understanding and permissiveness toward people. He must have such other traits of personality as friendliness, humor, humility, and interest in people, that make for effectiveness in leading adults.

d. He must be creative in his thinking about teaching methods. He must be willing to experiment with new ways to meet the changing needs and interests of adults. He must be concerned more with the growth of the individual than with the presentation of facts.

e. Such standard requirements as status in the community or occupational group, previous teaching experience, etc., are desirable only when they are compatible with the characteristics described above.

3. *Should instructors be volunteer or paid?* The majority of instructors in institutional programs are paid. As a rule, having an instructor on the pay roll seems to result in better administrative relationships in organized classes. The director feels freer to make demands on paid instructors for the good of the program. There are some instances, however, in which volunteer instructors have made outstanding contributions in institutional programs. It sometimes happens that very prominent people, who could not possibly be motivated by economic considerations, can be persuaded to instruct a course as a community service. It would be a mistake, of course, to have a hard and fast rule that would eliminate such people. Volunteer instructors are found frequently in church, civic organization, and club programs, are usually closely identified with the sponsoring organization, and are highly motivated by a sense of loyalty to their group.

4. *Who should hire and fire instructors?* It is generally accepted as good practice in all types of organizations that the responsibility for the employment and supervision of workers

should be centralized in a single executive. The program director should have the final authority to employ and dismiss teachers. He may find it helpful, however, to seek the advice of members of his committee in judging whether or not given candidates meet the established criteria.

5. *Should there be a written contract?* It is generally found desirable to have some kind of written agreement between the instructor and the organization, so as to avoid any possible misunderstanding. The sample "Letter of Appointment" on page 48 will illustrate the kinds of information such an agreement might contain.

COMPENSATION OF INSTRUCTORS

There are several methods of compensating instructors, including the per-hour or per-course basis, the per-student basis, and the percentage-of-income basis. The most commonly accepted practice is to pay each instructor so much per hour of instruction or per course (which are basically the same thing). The difficulty of this method is that there may not be a large enough enrollment in a given course to cover the instructor's fee. It is generally considered poor practice to request that the instructor accept less than the fee originally agreed on, and so the program director is faced with the alternatives of subsidizing or discontinuing the course. By good planning it is usually possible to balance income-producing against subsidy-requiring courses. However, it is wise to have an understanding with the instructor in advance that if the course fails to attract a sufficient number of students it may be canceled without obligation beyond compensation for the actual number of hours of instruction given.

The practice of compensating instructors on the basis of the number of students enrolled in their courses or on the basis of a certain percentage of income produced by each course is generally frowned on as introducing an undesirable element of commercialism into the relationship of the instructor with the program. Most adult educators prefer to regard their instructors as professional people who are entitled to a certain fee for services rendered.

LETTER OF APPOINTMENT

January 3, 1950

Mr. Joseph Smith
610 Main Street
Middleburg, Middlestate

DEAR MR. SMITH:

This is to confirm your appointment (or reappointment) to the faculty of the Community Center Adult Education Program.

Your assignment is as follows:

Courses: 1. Improving Your Speech
2. Speaking for Radio
First session: January 17
Room: 215
Compensation: $50 for each eight-week course, totaling $100 for the term, payable one-half January 31 and one-half February 28

As you know, this assignment is contingent upon the development of an adequate enrollment. I shall appreciate your signing and returning the attached duplicate of this letter, agreeing to these conditions.

I am looking forward to working with you during the coming term and sincerely hope that your experience will be a fruitful one.

Yours very truly,

JOHN R. DOE
Director of Adult Education

.....

INSTRUCTOR'S AGREEMENT:

This will acknowledge receipt of the above letter and my agreement to the terms stated in it.

*(Signed)*_____

The exact amount of compensation that will be best in a given situation will depend upon such factors as:

1. *The standard practice among other organizations in the community.* This practice varies widely not only among communities but among organizations within the same community. Compensation for evening high school teachers, for instance, is usually based on the standard scale for all teachers in the system and is graduated according to length of service. Recent studies indicate that it ranges from $2.50 per hour to about $7.50 per

hour. The practice among other organizations in the same community is usually to pay according to a higher scale, ranging from $3.00 to $15. If an organization wants to attract the best quality of instructors it will probably have to match the highest rates being offered in the community.

2. *The amount necessary to attract an individual instructor with special qualifications.* To obtain the services of a psychiatrist, it may be necessary to offer him a higher compensation than is offered most other types of instructors. In this case, one would be competing for his service not merely with other educational institutions, but with private patients with whom he could be spending his time.

3. *The tuition rates the participants can afford to pay.* This consideration will greatly influence the rates one can pay instructors, unless there will be outside sources of income with which to subsidize the program. If the participants of a course are to be high-income business men who have strong motivation to take the course, then one can probably afford to pay an unusually good instructor at an unusually high rate. On the other hand, if the clientele is that of a neighborhood settlement, tuition rates will have to be very low and the rate of compensation for instructors will have to be in proportion—except that in this case one may be able to interest the "best" instructors in giving courses as a public service.

The question is often raised: Should all instructors be paid at the same rate, or should there be a flexible scale with certain types of instructors receiving higher rates than others? There are some adult educators who feel that the only fair thing to do is to pay all instructors at the same rate, and they criticize scales as promoting a caste system. There are others who feel that one must face the fact that a man who has achieved a higher pay scale in his regular work expects a higher rate of compensation than one whose normal income is lower. They point out that it is necessary to pay more to interest a highly trained professional man than to interest a highly competent arts and crafts teacher. Similarly, a psychiatrist will generally demand a higher rate than a psychologist. If a program is to be enriched with this kind of leadership, the pattern of different rates of compensation that has been established in our society may have to be accepted.

If the flexible scale of compensation is adopted, it would

probably be advisable to establish quotas for each level of compensation. In a given program the quotas might be twenty instructors at $5 per hour, ten at $7.50, five at $10, and two at $15. In this way the tendency to move all the instructors toward the top rate would be avoided.

TRAINING AND SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTORS

The selection of good instructors is only the first step in producing a good teaching staff. Even the best instructor cannot do his best job unless he has been properly oriented into the program. He should understand its objectives, its philosophy of education, its methods, and exactly where he fits into the organization. During his entire tenure he should have a progressive sense of belonging and of personally growing. How can such an orientation be achieved? Several methods can be suggested.

Individual Conferences

The basic tool of supervision and training is the periodic interview with individual instructors. Certainly the program director should have one or more extended interviews with an instructor between the time of employment and the first meeting of his course. During these interviews the instructor should be given an understanding of the background of the organization—its history. purpose, and total program. He should be given some insight into the nature of the adult students he will be teaching, and what they are likely to expect of him. He should be acquainted with the physical and staff resources that will be available. Above all, he should be injected with the spirit of the program; he should be challenged to do a creative job of meeting the real needs of the participants. He should be told that the course is his personal responsibility, that he does not have to follow a stereotyped outline developed by someone else, but can try out his own ideas and the ideas of course members. He should be assured that the program director will stand ready to discuss his plans with him and make suggestions, but that in no case will he seek to impose an authoritarian pattern.

Following the initial orientation interviews, there should be subsequent interviews—in decreasing frequency as the instructor gains experience—to help the instructor evaluate his progress and to make suggestions growing out of the program director's experience with other situations. These interviews need not be formally scheduled, but might take place in the hallway between classes or at the end of the evening.

Printed Materials

At the time of employment, each instructor should be given copies of printed materials describing the organization and its program, including folders, reports, activities schedules, and other descriptive materials. All instructors should be put on the mailing list to receive subsequent printed materials as they are issued. Many adult educators also make it a point of obtaining reprints of articles and reports bearing on subjects concerning adult education as a movement, teaching methods, or specific courses, and circulating these among their instructors.

Internal Memoranda

If judiciously used, internal memoranda can be a valuable tool of good administration. They can be used to acquaint instructors with new policies, procedures, and activities. They may contain announcements to be made to the classes. Certainly each instructor should have an explanation in writing before the opening meeting of his part in the registration and opening night processes. An example of such a memorandum is shown below.

PROCEDURES FOR FACULTY
CENTRAL Y.M.C.A. ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM
Chicago, Illinois

A. Registration and Enrollment

1. All students should be enrolled in the adult education department, third floor, before being admitted to class.
2. Students who wish to visit classes prior to enrollment may be issued guest passes at the adult education registration table, provided the class they wish to visit is not filled to capacity.

BERKELEY BAPTIST DIVINITY SCHOOL
SANDFORD FLEMING LIBRARY

B. Class Cards and Attendance Records

1. At the first meeting of each course (and in the case of new students in subsequent meetings) the instructor should take from each student the class card which bears the name of the course involved, or a guest pass. If a student does not have such a card, send him to the adult education office, third floor.
2. Indicate presence of the student by checking in the proper square opposite "Record of Attendance." To record absences, write "A."
3. Class cards should be left in each instructor's folder in the instructors' boxes at the close of each evening.
4. Regular class books will be issued about the end of the second week, in which attendance will be indicated as above. These, also, should be left in the instructor's file between meetings.

C. Opening Night

1. Please write your name and subject on the board at the beginning of the period.
2. It is suggested that, in order to increase the atmosphere of informality and friendliness which is fundamental to our program, a short period be set aside at the first meeting for each student to introduce himself and give a brief description of his background and interests in the course.
3. A supply of "Instructor's Information Cards" is in your folder, for use at your option in obtaining background data about individuals in your group.

D. Since many of the courses will meet in places other than the Y.M.C.A., we should like each instructor to provide us with an itinerary of the various places the class will meet at subsequent sessions. If you will leave this list with Mrs. Cremer, registrar, we shall mimeograph copies for each member of your classes so that there will be no doubt in their minds as to where the class is going to meet. We shall appreciate your co-operation.

E. Administrative Communications

Each instructor is requested to examine his folder in the file before each meeting. Announcements and memoranda will be placed in these folders.

Course Plans

A device that is useful in helping an instructor to a good start is a written course plan. This plan might be in the form of a topical outline for the course. There is a danger, however, that such an outline would produce too rigid a frame of mind in the instructor, so that he would not be sufficiently sensitive to the individual needs of the participants. The questions in

the sample course plan that follows seem to ask for much more significant information than would be contained in a topical outline.

INSTRUCTORS' COURSE PLAN

Each instructor is requested to prepare this planning sheet in duplicate, one copy to be returned to the Director of Adult Education, the other to be retained by the instructor. The purpose of the planning sheet is threefold: (1) to facilitate co-operative planning between administration and faculty; (2) to serve as a guide to the instructor in the development of the course; and (3) to provide an instrument of evaluation at the end of the term.

Name of Course .....

Instructor .....

I. Aims
   - A. What is the general scope and purpose of this course?
   - B. What specific results do you hope to achieve with individuals?

II. Instruction Methods and Content
   - A. What content do you plan to cover in the course?
   - B. What is your plan of development of the content—what will be the sequence?
   - C. What devices do you plan to use to detect, arouse, and maintain student interest?
   - D. What course materials—texts, outlines, audio-visual aids, etc.—do you plan to use?
   - E. How will students participate in the process? List specific plans for discussions, assignments, projects, field trips, tests, etc.

III. Evaluation
   - A. By what criteria will you judge the success of your course?
   - B. How will you measure and appraise student progress?

The course plan should, of course, be discussed with the instructor at an interview prior to the beginning of the course.

Faculty Meetings

Faculty meetings are usually more difficult to schedule in informal adult education programs than in formal schools, where the teachers are employed full time. The teachers of informal evening courses are usually busy people, and it is difficult to

bring them together as a group at any one time. Faculty meetings have many advantages, however, over other methods of training, and should be held at least two or three times a year. During the two or three weeks between terms is usually a propitious time, since courses are not in session.

Probably the best type of faculty meetings is that in which there is a free discussion by the teachers of problems that concern them. One very successful faculty meeting, for instance, was devoted entirely to a discussion of "What is a good learning situation?" After a two-hour discussion this faculty had listed over a dozen characteristics of the "ideal" learning situation and, in the process, had developed a much better feeling of *esprit de corps* and unity of purpose. Faculty meetings can also be used for training teachers in the use of audio-visual aids, for discussing case problems, for participation by the teachers in policy determination, for giving special recognition, and for joint planning.

Class Visitation

Adult education administrators do not agree as to the desirability of direct observation by members of the staff of classes in session. Some administrators feel that it is only by visiting classes that they can really know what is going on in their program. They also feel that the instructors appreciate having the administrative staff show enough interest in their work to drop around and see them in action. Other administrators feel that instructors resent their visiting classes and think of it as snooping. They also hesitate to cause the interruption that is involved when a strange person enters a class in session. Probably the only solution to the problem is to let the faculty decide for themselves, individually and as a group, whether they would find class visitations a help or a hindrance.

Observation

An alternative to class visitations by members of the staff is periodic controlled observation by graduate students from a near-by university, by members of the directing committee, or by other disinterested outsiders. It would seem advisable, how-

ever, to arrange such visitations only with the co-operation of the faculty, and to make their reports available to the faculty.

Narrative Records

A simple narrative account of each course meeting serves several purposes: (1) It enables the instructor to communicate his concerns and observations to the supervisor; (2) it enables the supervisor to keep in touch with what is happening in every course; (3) it provides a convenient method for bringing to the attention of the supervisor any needs of course members, such as the need for counseling, that should be taken care of outside the course; (4) it helps the instructor to evaluate himself and to measure the progress of the group.

Narrative reports may follow a standard form, with each instructor answering the same set of questions, or they may be free-running expressions. A degree of uniformity is required, however, if the supervisor wishes to make comparisons among courses. The minimum information a supervisor should be able to get from narrative reports is the following:[2]

1. Subject matter development
2. Methods, techniques, and materials used
3. Group behavior and growth
4. Individual behavior and growth
5. Interpretations of the instructor
6. Individual and group problems requiring further attention

BUILDING FACULTY MORALE

Certainly one objective of the whole process of training and supervision is to build good faculty morale—to bring about an enthusiastic pooling of effort toward a common goal. Good morale is largely achieved when the instructors have a clear understanding of the objectives of the organization for which they are working and subscribe wholeheartedly to them. This puts a burden on the program director constantly to inter-

[2] For a fuller treatment of the use of records in supervision, see Grace Coyle, *Studies in Group Behavior* (New York: Association Press, 1937), and Hedley S. Dimock and Harleigh B. Trecker, *The Supervision of Group Work and Recreation* (New York: Association Press, 1949).

pret these objectives and to give them a sense of significance. Good morale also involves a feeling of belongingness on the part of the faculty members. This feeling can be produced by giving them an opportunity to take part in the making of decisions affecting them, by inviting their participation in ceremonial occasions, and by extending to them the privilege of partcipating in other regular activities of the institution. Their morale is likely to be improved, also, if they are given a sense of being a part of the important larger movement of adult education through being invited to attend meetings and conferences sponsored by adult education councils and associations.

Administrative Procedures

To an adult participant, administrative red tape is likely to be regarded as a necessary evil, the less of it the better. To a program director, administrative procedures are instruments of orderly control, the more complete the better. Good practice strikes a balance between these points of view. The administrative procedures should be simple and flexible enough to inspire the good will rather than the ire of the adult students, but they should be thorough enough to provide the basic requirements of good administration. The following procedures are usually required for almost all informal course programs.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Forms and Records

Careful thought should be given to the drafting of the forms required for registration of students. They should be as simple as possible and should ask only for the minimum amount of information needed for carrying on the program efficiently. The forms illustrated on page 57 have been devised for a rather extensive program in an institution offering many other services and containing a centralized business office. These forms can be simplified and adapted to less extensive programs.

Sequence of Service

The process of registration should be carefully worked out in advance, if a large number of participants is expected, in order

CENTRAL YMCA ADULT EDUCATION ENROLLMENT CARD

To Student: Please print, in ink. Do not fill in subjects; this is done by the Registrar. After you have completed your enrollment, exchange this card for class cards immediately.

Name Mr. Mrs. Miss _____ Home Phone _____
Last First Initial

Address _____ Zone _____

Employer _____ Bus. Phone _____

Address of Firm _____ Occupation _____

Age _____ Married _____ Single _____ YMCA Member _____ Veteran _____

Education: 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 (Circle last year) 1 2 3 4 (College) 1 2 3 4 (Other)

COURSE TITLE	DAY	HOUR

613 10M L&C 4-46

Approved _____ Date _____

THE CENTRAL YMCA ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM — **FOR CASHIER'S OFFICE**

IF THIS STUDENT HAS NEVER BEEN ENROLLED IN CENTRAL YMCA SCHOOLS BEFORE CHECK HERE ☐

NAME Mr. Mrs. Miss _____
(LAST) (FIRST) (INITIAL)

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

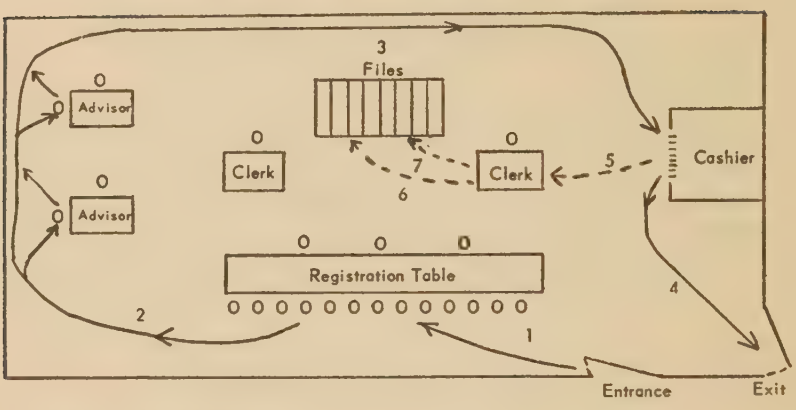
DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

	CHARGE OR COURSE	AMOUNT		DATE	RECEIPT	AMOUNT	
APPROVED BY	DATE						

501 3M 8-46 L&C

that there will be a smooth and efficient movement of registrants. A very useful device in achieving this end is the "traffic flow chart," such as the one illustrated on the following page.

REGISTRATION TRAFFIC FLOW CHART



Control of Class Size

Usually in informal classes a limit is placed on class size—below a certain minimum the course will be cancelled and above a set maximum either enrollments will not be accepted or additional sections will be opened. In order that the program director may know at any time how many students are enrolled in each class a simple enrollment chart can be maintained by one of the clerks. As she makes out a class card for each enrollment, she merely places a check after that course in the chart, as shown below.

ENROLLMENT CHART

Course	Enrollments	Limit
Painting As A Hobby	///// ///// ///// ///	18
Section No. 2	///// //	18
Current Events.....	///	25
Speaking In Public	///// ///// ///// ///	25

It may be desirable also, in the case of courses that have reached their maximum quota of enrollments and in which additional sections cannot be opened, to maintain a waiting

list of people who would like to enroll in the course if one of the present enrollees drops out.

Reservations

Most informal course programs stipulate that reservations cannot be made in courses without either full or partial payment of tuition fees. They have found from experience that much grief usually comes from accepting reservations without payment. Only a small percentage of such reservations are ever taken up.

Time of Registration

Should registration be permitted only during a specified period, say for three evenings in the week preceding the opening of the term, or should registration services be available during normal working hours continuously for a period of a week or two before and after classes start? Both systems have wide acceptance and each has certain advantages.

When registration is concentrated into a short period in advance of the starting of classes there is likely to be a high percentage of advance registrations, which means less confusion on opening nights. Also, concentration makes possible the more efficient use of man power, clerical and advisory. It has certain disadvantages, however, including the greater inconvenience to enrollees, more waiting lines, and more tendency to hurry the process of registration. In addition, there will always be a large percentage of people who will not come in to register before the opening night anyway.

By permitting registration any time during working hours, including certain evening hours, for a week or two prior to the start of the term, the adult students will be able to come in at a time convenient to them. The process is likely to be less hurried and more informal, and there will probably be less waiting. This system, however, involves the scheduling of more staff time to registration. The experience in one institution following this policy has been that about one-half of the total enrollments take place in advance of the opening night (with plenty of urging in the literature to "enroll in advance, save time, and

be sure of a place"). Most of the remaining enrollments occur during the first week, but there are some stragglers as long as three weeks after the opening date.

Registration by Mail

A number of programs permit students to register simply by sending in a written request accompanied by a check or money order. It is difficult to understand how the evils arising when students are not properly counseled can be avoided if this practice is followed. Several program directors report that the percentage of drop-outs and complaints is considerably higher among students who register by mail than it is among those who register personally.

OPENING NIGHT PROCEDURES

Every program director should be prepared for a series of crises during the opening week of a program of informal courses. It seems that some are inevitable, although good planning can reduce them to a minimum. Here are some suggestions that may be helpful:

1. Have directional signs in strategic spots pointing out the flow of traffic.

2. Have the doors of activity rooms clearly marked, preferably with signs indicating the courses meeting in them.

3. Have members of the committee or former students who know the physical facilities posted in lobby areas to help new students find the proper locations.

4. Be prepared to discontinue courses that have insufficient enrollment quickly and without embarrassment. It is wise to have established in advance a chart of minimum enrollments for each course. In some cases it may be desirable to continue a course with a borderline number of enrollments, because of its intrinsic worth in a balanced program, or an unusual degree of enthusiasm among the students, or some other extenuating circumstances. It may sometimes be desirable to carry a course conditionally for another week, especially if there is good indication that additional students can be picked

up meantime. The director should feel no embarrassment in closing a course if he accepts the fact ahead of time that there will always be a certain percentage of failures in a program that is courageous in exploring new needs and interests. Students enrolled in courses that are discontinued should be offered their choice between a cash refund and transferring to another course (the latter alternative is a much more likely possibility if the course is discontinued early in the opening meeting).

5. Prepare the instructors carefully to handle their responsibilities during the open meetings. These duties will usually consist of collecting admission cards, introducing themselves and the subject, establishing a friendly group feeling, and determining the needs and interests of the students. This latter objective might be greatly advanced by the use of a simple information card for students to fill out as they are waiting for class to begin (thus sparing them the discomfort of sitting idly while the class assembles).

INSTRUCTOR'S INFORMATION CARD
Adult Education Program

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

EMPLOYER _____

TYPE OF WORK (position) _____

AGE _____ MARITAL STATUS _____

EDUCATION _____

_____

What do you want to get out of this course? _____

_____

_____

ATTENDANCE RECORDS, GRADES, AND CERTIFICATES

Some adult educators object to keeping attendance records in informal course programs for the reason that it introduces an element of formality and, by implication, of compulsion that is foreign to the spirit of voluntary adult learning. Many program directors, however, feel that attendance records are necessary to efficient administration. Attendance records give an indication, for instance, as to how well the individual instructors are maintaining the interest of their students.

Simplified standard attendance records can be obtained from any school supply house. The names of the students enrolled in each course should be entered at the end of the second or third week (after the enrollment has stabilized) by the office clerk, from the class cards in her file. It is advisable to have the instructors leave the attendance records in the office between class meetings in order that the program director can check them periodically.

Attendance records can also be valuable in following up on absentees. In some institutions it is the practice to send a friendly postcard to each student who has been absent for two consecutive meetings. Experience has shown that frequently students have simply grown out of the habit of coming to class and that such a reminder revives their interest.

Attendance records are obviously necessary where it is a policy to refund tuition to students who maintain a certain percentage of attendance (a practice fairly common in public high school evening course programs) or when certificates of attendance are awarded. This latter practice, while not yet very common, has much to recommend it. For, although informal courses do not carry any credit, there is a strong feeling on the part of many adults that they would like to have something to show for their efforts. A simple attendance certificate, stating specifically the nature of the achievement, will often fill a real need.

Should grades be given in informal courses? The general practice is against it. Adults engage in education because they want to learn something. The test of their achievement, then, is not whether they can learn better than someone else, but

whether they have learned what is useful to them. It is important for adults to have some way to measure their own progress, and for teachers to be able to appraise development, but there are more natural and meaningful ways of doing this than grades. The use of grades introduces an element of formality and competition that runs counter to the very spirit of informal adult education.

It may be impossible for a program director to avoid the use of grades if his courses are closely associated with credit programs or if grades are required by law. In such a case, he must make provision in his record system for the recording of grades.

Financial Policies and Practices

No phase of adult education has more confusion or a wider variation in practice than finance. This situation arises in part out of the heterogeneity of organizations sponsoring adult programs, ranging from completely subsidized public school or state university programs to completely self-supporting voluntary organization programs. It arises in part, also, out of differences in point of view among adult education leaders—from those who believe that society has an obligation to provide free education to all who want it for as long as they want it, to those who believe that adults should pay entirely for their own education.

In spite of the wide variations in practice, it is possible to suggest certain basic principles for the financing of informal course programs.

Establishing an over-all financial policy

The same principles of good business management should be applied to informal course programs that pertain to any other activity involving financing. One of the primary requirements of good business management is a clear general financial policy. This policy ought to include at least the following elements:

1. Source of authority for budget approval and financial policy determination

2. Limitations, if any, on specific budgetary items (in some governmental programs, for instance, the amount that can be allocated to administrative expense is limited to a percentage of the total budget)

3. Prorating of overhead costs where other programs or services are being operated under the same sponsorship

4. Degree of self-support that will be aimed for; limitations on the subsidy that will be forthcoming

5. Methods and standards of accounting

6. Bases for computing fees charged to participants

7. Sources of income other than fees, and conditions under which they are to be exploited

8. The nature and frequency of financial reports that will be required.

ESTABLISHING COURSE FEES

There is a general lack of agreement among adult educators as to the proper basis for determining the proportion of costs that should be carried by the participants. It might be helpful, however, to list some of the typical practices. An examination of over thirty folders from a wide variety of programs reveals these tuition charges to be in effect in 1948-1949:

University of California University Extension: 10 weekly meetings of 1½ hours @ $7.50; 12 meetings of 2½ hours @ $15; 18 meetings of 2½ hours @ $22.50

Evening School of the Western Electric Company's Hawthorne Works, Chicago: 13 meetings of 1½ hours @ $3.50

Seattle Y.M.C.A. Adult Hobby School: 8 meetings of 1½ hours @ $5 ($3.50 for Y.M.C.A. members) or $4 each for married couples

The Adult School of Montclair, New Jersey: 10 meetings of 1 hour @ $5, $6.50, and $8; 10 meetings of 1½ hours @ $3, $5, $6.50, and $8; 10 meetings of 2 hours @ $5, $8, and $10

Dayton Y.M.C.A. Informal School: 8 meetings of 1½ hours @ $4 ($3 for Y.M.C.A. members); 10 meetings of 1½ hours @ $6 ($5 for Y.M.C.A. members)

The Institute of Adult Studies of the Anshe Emet Synagogue, Chicago: 12 meetings of 1½ hours @ $5

Maine, Illinois, Township High School Adult Evening School: 10 meetings of 2 hours @ $5 plus registration fee of $1

Association School, Huntington Avenue Y.M.C.A., Boston: 10 meetings of 1 hour @ $6; 10 meetings of 1½ hours @ $5 and

$7; 10 meetings of 2 hours @ $8 and $10. Reductions of from $1 to $2 are given to Y.M.C.A. members and servicemen

Boston Center for Adult Education: 10 meetings of 1 hour @ $6.50 and $7; 10 meetings of 2 hours @ $8, $8.50, $9, $9.50, and $10.50

Extension Courses, Chicago Board of Education: $5 deposit for all courses, refunded upon 75% attendance

Chicago Y.W.C.A. Education Workshop: 12 weekly meetings of 1 hour @ $7, $8, and $9 (two $9 courses for $16)

University College, University of Chicago: credit courses @ $45 and $50 per quarter; non-credit special interest seminars @ $12 to $18 for 10 meetings of 2 hours

Learning for Living Program, Central Y.M.C.A., Chicago: 10 meetings of 1½ hours @ $10, $12, and $15 (with a 20% reduction for Y.M.C.A. members and veterans)

(A disproportionate number of cases are cited from Chicago in order to illustrate the wide variation in practice within a single community.)

Attempts have been made to develop formulas that will yield the proper tuition charges in a given situation, but none has yet been produced that has met the test of varied experiences. Factors which enter into the determination of course fees include:

1. *Amount of subsidy available.* In many governmental and public school programs, more or less liberal allotments are made for adult education, frequently with limitations placed on the charges that can be made. In some voluntary organizations contributions are received from the community chest or private subscribers, on the understanding that charges to participants will be held to a minimum.

2. *The nature of the clientele being served.* Tuition rates should not be set so high that they will act as an economic barrier to the participants one wishes to attract to the program. On the other hand, the charge should not be so low as to depreciate the value of the course. It seems to be a characteristic of our culture that people tend to value articles or services according to their cost.

3. *The intensity of motivation in the adult students.* In some subjects the motivation seems to be almost universally high, such as public speaking and courses leading to vocational advancement. It is considered good practice by many adult educators to charge at a high rate in these types of courses, in order to be able to carry other subjects which should appear in a well-

balanced program but which seldom pay their own way, such as many of the cultural courses, arts and crafts, and public affairs.

4. *The cost of instruction.* As has been pointed out in the section dealing with compensation to instructors, it is necessary to pay more to certain types of instructors than to others to interest them in teaching. These higher costs can be reflected in the tuition charges for those courses, provided the motivation is proportionately higher on the part of the students. (And students would frequently prefer to pay more to study under Mr. X than to pay less for a course with Mr. Y.)

5. *The standards set by similar organizations in the community.* While the tuition charges in other informal course programs in the community should not necessarily be an inflexible criterion in determining the fees of a program, it would be advisable to study them and to depart from them only for good reason. It may be that a new program will be of a different quality or is designed for a different clientele. On the other hand, the factor of "competitive pricing" might enter in.

For many years it was assumed that informal adult courses could not be self-supporting, that they inevitably required a large subsidy. This assumption may have retarded the growth of the adult education movement, especially among small organizations lacking funds with which to subsidize such a program. A growing body of experience, however, tends to disprove it. Programs of various kinds and sizes are finding adults able and willing to pay their share of the costs.

There may be danger in charging too little for informal courses, with two unfortunate effects. First, adult education has tended to become stereotyped in people's minds as being primarily a charity activity for underprivileged people. While adult education has an extremely important function in serving the lower educational levels of our society, it also has a vital service to render the well-educated levels. In the second place, the practice of undervaluing informal courses has jeopardized its expansion among organizations that cannot afford to subsidize programs highly. As Debatin says, "The courage to put a fair value upon one's work will speedily help to make the product respectable,"[3] and, we might add, more widespread.

[3] Frank M. Debatin, *Administration of Adult Education* (New York: American Book Co., 1938), p. 381.

DETERMINING COSTS

Loose practices of cost accounting are common. Many course programs are operated as extensions of the larger programs of sponsoring organizations and, as such, use space and administrative services that are not charged directly to them. It is therefore practically impossible to make any kind of meaningful study of the comparative costs of operation of different informal course programs. This practice makes it difficult for the sponsoring organization or the director of informal courses to arrive at any accurate estimate of the cost of operating an informal course program.

Good business practice requires that the budget of an informal course program include its prorated share of such institution-wide costs as building operation, administrative services, and other overhead items.

Specific methods for determining such direct operating expenses as promotion and instruction are considered in Chapter 9* and earlier in this chapter, and their amalgamation into an expense budget will be discussed in Chapter 8.*

SOURCES OF INCOME OTHER THAN TUITION

In actual practice informal adult course programs are rather heavily subsidized. Some of the chief sources of support in addition to tuition income are as follows:

1. *Federal funds* for programs sponsored by Federal agencies and for the subsidizing of such local programs as agricultural extension and TVA.

2. *State funds* directly supporting such state-supported programs as state university extension and indirectly supporting local public school programs through legislative grants.

3. *Public school funds,* limited usually to the support of public school programs.

4. *Industrial funds.* These are used in three ways: (a) to support programs sponsored by industries for their own personnel; (b) to subsidize non-industrial programs through contributions; and (c) to pay the tuition charges in whole or in part for the enrollment of their own personnel in non-industrial programs. Many community agencies receive generous support from industries whose workers they serve.

5. *Community funds and private contributors.* A willingness

* In *Informal Adult Education.*

has been shown on the part of many community chests and private contributors to support adult education programs when they can demonstrate that they are providing valuable service to the community.

6. *Grants from foundations* for research projects, publications, and experimental programs.

7. *Profits from the sale of books and materials.* In larger programs this may be a worth-while source of income. Many adult educators feel, however, that they should supply books and materials at cost.

8. *Veterans Administration.* While it is possible for some informal course programs to qualify under the G.I. Bill of Rights, few have found it to be worth while. The Bill was designed primarily for the enrollment of veterans in credit programs, and many limitations are placed on allowances for non-credit courses. Furthermore, the tuition costs of informal courses are usually comparatively so small that it is hardly worth the time it takes for a veteran to obtain a certificate of eligibility.

While it may be desirable as a general goal for informal course programs to become self-supporting, it is unwise in most cases for a new program to be started without some source of support other than tuition. The process of building up a new clientele requires investment. Few programs have achieved a balanced budget during the first year or two of their existence. Probably the most common method of obtaining this additional support among private organizations is to estimate the amount of subsidy that will be required during the first year and then to conduct a well-planned finance campaign to raise the required amount from private contributors.

PAYMENT PRACTICES

Good will can be made or lost in the financial relationships an organization establishes with its participants. If policies regarding payments are too lenient, they are likely to leave an impression of carelessness and poor administration. If they are too hard and inflexible, they are likely to give an organization the stigma of commercialism. As in most things, the golden mean is probably best, though not always easy to achieve.

Whatever financial rules are finally decided on should be stated clearly and circulated conspicuously, in order that the chances

of misunderstanding are reduced to a minimum. Even then the program director should be prepared for a small proportion of people who will demand special favors and refuse to abide by the rules.

Deferred Payments

The practice of permitting students to pay their tuition charges over an extended period of time may add to the convenience of many students and reduce the economic barrier to their enrollment, but it involves a number of dangers and disadvantages. It complicates the accounting system required and involves unpleasantness in the collecting of overdue bills. It may encourage marginal participants to encumber themselves with debt when they should really be helped with scholarships. Some adult educators claim that the percentage of drop-outs among students making deferred payments is much greater than that among students who have paid in advance.

The practice regarding deferred payments is largely determined by the size of tuition charges. Most programs in which the tuition is $15 or less make no provision for deferred payments, while a majority of those with tuition charges greater than $15 have some kind of extended payment plan. These plans usually require payment in two or three installments before the end of the term and make an accounting charge of $1 to $3 for the privilege. Frequently provision is made for a penalty to be imposed for late payments. If a deferred payment plan is used, provision will have to be made for notifying instructors when students are behind in their payments and are to be barred from class.

Single Admission and Guest Passes

It is common practice to permit new students to attend single meetings of classes upon purchase of a single admission ticket (which is taxable, by the way, whereas tuition is not). This practice is seriously questioned by some program directors because it encourages "shoppers" and adds greatly to the confusion of opening meetings. They maintain that if a good job is done in counseling new registrants, single admissions are not

necessary. There may arise exceptional situations, however, in which observation of a class would be helpful in determining whether or not a certain student belongs in it. In this case, it may be desirable simply to issue a guest pass with no charge.

When single admission tickets are sold, the amount paid can usually be credited toward the course tuition if the course has not reached its quota.

Refunds

Refunds are so annoying that it is becoming general practice to have a flat no-refund policy. Even the hardest-headed program directors find it almost impossible, however, not to grant special exceptions in the case of authenticated disability or removal from the city. One way to ameliorate the effect of a rigid no-refund policy somewhat is to grant certificates of credit, enabling the student who wishes to drop a certain course to apply the money paid on it to any other course within a specified period, usually one year. This alternative has gone a long way in preserving good will. It is always understood, of course, that refunds will be granted in full when courses are discontinued by the organization.

Those organizations that do grant refunds usually have quite rigid procedures, such as the filing of a formal request in writing giving a full explanation of the reason for desiring a refund, and the review of all requests by a special committee or administrative officer. Refunds are frequently limited to certain "act of God" types of situations and are denied if the student has merely capriciously changed his mind. It is common practice in institutions granting refunds to devise tables showing the percentage of the original payment that will be refunded after one, two, three, four, etc. weeks of attendance. These tables usually deduct a rather large percentage (20 per cent to 30 per cent) for the first meeting, to take care of service costs. Refunds are seldom granted after the midpoint of a term.

Transfers

Most organizations are very liberal about allowing students to transfer from one course to another, provided the quota

of the second course has not been filled and provided the transfer is requested within a reasonable time after the beginning of the term. Special procedures must be established for transfers, since registration and financial records will have to be changed.

Scholarships

Most informal course programs, especially if their tuition charges are relatively high, make some kind of provision for the granting of full or part scholarships to individuals who would otherwise be barred from the programs. It is general practice either to set aside a certain amount in the budget or to obtain special contributions for this purpose. The conditions under which scholarships are to be granted should be clearly stated by the policy-making committee.

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